

Terry Branstad's accomplishments and work ethic. It is gratifying to see those attributes get attention on a national scale and in the history books. He has earned his place in history.

Of course, First Lady Christine Branstad ought to be complimented too. We thank her for her public service and, most importantly, for sharing her family with all Iowans.

We are lucky to have had Governor Terry Branstad for these years as chief executive in Iowa, and, of course, I am lucky to call him a friend.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). The Senator from Maryland.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, it is my understanding that some of my colleagues want to talk about our visit to Paris, but I understand Senator HATCH will be on the floor at 2:45 p.m. and we are recessing at 3 o'clock.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Members be recognized for up to 5 minutes between now and 2:45 p.m., but it may not be in this order: Senator CARDIN, Senator SCHATZ, Senator UDALL, Senator SHAHEEN, Senator MERKLEY, Senator MARKEY, and Senator COONS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

PARIS CLIMATE CHANGE TALKS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I had the opportunity of heading a delegation this past weekend of 10 Senators who went to Paris for the COP21 talks, the climate change talks taking place in Paris. I was very proud of our delegation consisting of Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator FRANKEN, Senator MARKEY, Senator MERKLEY, Senator UDALL, Senator SHAHEEN, Senator COONS, Senator BOOKER, and Senator SCHATZ. All of us participated in the meetings that took place in Paris. We were impressed that 150 leaders of the world were in Paris at one time to show their support for a successful outcome on climate change and to express their urgency for dealing with this issue. I think it was a strong followup to the challenge Pope Francis gave all of us as to the moral challenge of our time to protect our planet for future generations.

At the meeting in Paris, we recognized that our global health is at stake. Whether we are talking about our individual States—and I could talk about the people on Smith Island, as their island is disappearing, or the health of the Chesapeake Bay, and my colleagues in the western part of this country could talk about the wildfires and what is happening there. In Asia, we see climate migrants as a result of climate change. In Greenland, we see the glaciers disappearing. Every nation is at risk as a result of global climate change, and that is why 150 leaders went to Paris.

The objective is clear. We had a chance to talk to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon. He made it clear that our goal at a minimum should be to reduce the increase in warming by 2 degrees Celsius. That is doable. The scientists tell us we can do it. And if we do, we will have a healthier planet, we will create more jobs, and not only America but the world will be more secure.

It was clear that U.S. leadership was critically important to that moment in Paris. President Obama, in getting China and other countries to submit action plans, encouraged over 180 countries that are participating in the Paris talks to submit their own action plans to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. That represents over 97 percent of the world's emitters.

As I mentioned, we met with the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon. We all met with former Vice President Al Gore. I think we all were inspired by his lifelong dedication to this issue. We had a chance to meet with U.S. lead negotiator Todd Stern, who updated us on what was happening.

We were particularly impressed with Secretary Moniz, our Secretary of Energy. He had earlier announced, with other world energy leaders, an innovation initiative showing how we can use U.S. technology to make it easier for the world to meet their goals in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and at the same time create more jobs in America. It was an impressive display.

We had a chance to meet with local leaders. Mayor Bloomberg convened a summit of mayors. I was proud that my mayor from Baltimore City, Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, was there.

My colleagues participated in bilateral meetings of other countries to encourage them to be aggressive in submitting their obligations and how we could follow up and make sure we achieve our goals.

It was clear that Paris is heading toward a successful agreement, and it will have U.S. support. We mentioned our commitment to carry not just our individual commitment but to be part of the global agreements in Paris.

We pointed out that in 1992, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was ratified by the U.S. Senate. This is the legal basis for moving forward. We also pointed out that our obligations to comply with our own commitments are controlled by the Clean Air Act, which is the law of our country. We pointed out the actions taken by the Obama administration. We also pointed out that 69 percent of Americans agree that we should have a multilateral commitment to reduce our carbon emissions.

It was clear to us that by working together, we can have a healthier planet for our children and our grandchildren.

Mr. President, I yield the floor to Senator UDALL, one of the great leaders on the environment and a very active member of our delegation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I wish to first say to Senator CARDIN, who led our delegation—Senator CARDIN is the ranking member on the Foreign Relations Committee. Foreign relations has a lot to do with this issue. He showed great leadership, and I believe he is passionate about this issue and finding solutions.

So we were somewhat disappointed, the 10 of us who went—all Democrats—that Republicans didn't join us. This is an issue that needs bipartisanship. We need to join—Republicans and Democrats—on an issue that threatens our national security, threatens our economy, and threatens our environment. It is an issue that is looming out there and needs attention. So we look forward to working with our friends on the other side of the aisle to move forward on this issue.

As I looked over there and saw what was happening, I remembered many of the briefings we have had. Everyone who has looked at this challenge of global warming and climate change says that we need to do two things. First, we need to drive capital to new energy sources, to clean energy sources. We need to innovate is what they are talking about. If you get the capital there and you get the private sector working, you can come up with the solutions. Secondly, we need to put a signal in the marketplace to invest in clean energy and renewable energy.

I was so proud of what happened over there in terms of the world joining together. More than 184 countries came together, and we are going to see the conclusion of their action this week. They have stepped forward and said: We are going to have targets, we are going to have goals, and we are going to be transparent. We are going to let people know we are moving in the direction of solutions and doing something about this immense problem.

So it was a major step forward to see those 184 countries step up and decide to do something.

In addition, Bill Gates led a group of entrepreneurs over to Paris to announce and to challenge the world about energy research and development. As everyone knows, Bill Gates is one of our great entrepreneurs. He and his wife are also philanthropists. He stepped up with 27 other billionaires to say: We are going to put billions into research and development, and we are going to put it into innovation. They called this project Mission Innovation, and they challenged other countries around the world to do the same thing—double their energy research and budget.

So seeing 184 countries step up to the plate and say "We are going to do this"—and I think we will see those announcements in the next couple of days—and seeing these entrepreneurs step forward I think was a signal—and a bold signal—to the marketplace that we are changing and moving in a new